

# QUANTOCK MINISTRIES

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*A Bible teaching and preaching ministry  
for the Christian community*

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## JOHN 12 v 20 – 50

Following on from Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on what we know as Palm Sunday, there was a tremendous amount of excited activity in the city as the vast crowds were preparing for the Passover celebrations. Many, of course, were ecstatic that the Messiah (the Christ) was among them. This passage deals with some of the essential teaching Jesus was giving as to the true nature of His ministry at that time.

### v 20 – 22

These Greeks were most likely Gentile converts to Judaism, although some were possibly Hellenistic Jews, and their request to Philip was: "Sir, we would like to see Jesus". What a wonderful comment for a follower of Jesus to hear!

### v 23 – 26

In reply Jesus makes two points:

- a) The moment in history has arrived when His glorious fruit will embrace the whole world. As a result of His death, as the grain of wheat, many precious seeds will be born [again] and receive their [eternal] life. He came to God's own people, Israel, but after He has finished the work He has come to do, the whole world will be blessed, Greeks included! That's the time when they will "see Jesus" for who He really is.
- b) It has to be this way, for in this fallen world death is essential for further life. The seed must die to produce further life. (Death was not God's original means of creation; He is not the author of death, and therefore the idea of creation by evolution is completely unbiblical. Death came about as a result of mankind's sin, not before.) This principle of death leading to life now embraces Jesus, and will also embrace all who follow Jesus. He will die, producing a harvest of many redeemed people, and His followers must die to self (will, desires, ambitions, thoughts, opinions, etc) if they are to receive the honour of God for their service for Jesus.

### v 27

Jesus displays His humanity – a troubled heart. The options before Him are to ask to be rescued, and so to escape, or to stay firm to the full purpose for which He came to this world. He had already faced these options in the wilderness temptations just after His baptism. In our battles against the enemy we face the same inner tensions; do we take the easy path and give in to selfishness and the ways of the world, or do we stand firm in God's will and Word? The tension brought on by this spiritual conflict is far more than mere nervousness and apprehension; it is a troubled heart which feels the battle on a very deep and spiritual level.

### v 28 - 30

By dying to self and obeying Father's will, we glorify Him (Philippians 2 v 13). To demonstrate the truth of this, Jesus appeals directly to His Father, who answers from Heaven. Not everyone will hear the voice of God, but for those who do in their walk with Jesus, it is the only authentication they need.

### v 31 – 33

The cross stands for judgement on the whole world. After what Jesus is about to do, there is no further excuse for anyone. Satan's position is totally undermined by the cross (John 14 v 30, 16 v 11, Romans 8 v 31 – 34). This would all be achieved by the manner of His death – dying on the cross meant Jesus became the ultimate curse (Deuteronomy 21 v 23). This is why we must hold to the full nature of the Atonement. We cannot go along with those who regard the doctrine of the Atonement as “cosmic child-abuse”. Such people see the crucifixion as just an act of supreme love and example. *God's wrath as well as our sin was laid upon Jesus*, and necessarily so, or justice would not have been met following our sin. This is the full and sole ground of our redemption, and therefore the only way in which God can reach out (draw) and forgive us.

### v 34 – 36

People were still confused about the Messiah's (the Christ's) mission. As He explained to the two on the Emmaus road, following the Old Testament prophecies He first had to come as the suffering servant and only later will He return on a future occasion as the reigning king. Jesus points out that He has made this point, as the light illuminating the truth, time and time again. He, the light of the world, should be listened to while He is with them. He will not be with them much longer – are they listening? Genesis 6 v 3 – “My Spirit will not contend with man for ever”.

### v 37 – 41

John comments that the prophetic words of Isaiah show that God will seal the complete hardening of the hearts of those who have already hardened their hearts themselves. (There are none so blind as those who refuse to see!) He who sees the heart of each person makes the correct judgements, which often may be invisible to a mere human onlooker: “Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18 v 25). Incidentally, v 41 explains who it was that Isaiah saw in Isaiah 6 v 1 – Jesus Himself. This was a theophany – the appearance of the pre-incarnate second person of the Trinity. Another well-known example is the fourth person in the fiery furnace in Daniel 3 v 25. See also John 1 v 18, 1 Timothy 6 v 15b – 16 and Hebrews 1 v 3.

### v 42 – 46

John explains that many among the religious leaders accepted that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, but secretly, out of fear. Jesus addresses that fear by telling them that if they do believe in Him, that proves they are true believers in the true God. Jesus, the light of the world, alone reveals the one true Father God. This is the touchstone principle for anyone ever since who claims to believe in God. If it is indeed the One true God in whom they do believe, they will automatically believe in Jesus, and vice versa. The Holy Spirit will ensure this happens because God is a Trinity and if belief is genuine, then there will be a revelation of that fulness in the divine nature.

### v 47 – 50

The presence of Jesus in the world, both in the days of His human life here, and through the Holy Spirit's presence ever since, is for salvation, not judgement. There may well be consequences for sin, but we are not in the day of judgement yet. Judgement on the world will come later, in the time we call the Tribulation at the very end of the Church age, after the Rapture of all true believers. The final personal judgement of all unbelievers will be before the throne of God after all the ages of human history, when time will be no more and eternity is fully restored (Revelation 20 v 11 – 15). This is why we are not to judge; it is not our prerogative and, in any case, this is the age of grace and not the age of judgement (Matthew 7 v 1 and Romans 2 v 1 – 4).